



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Friday, March 16, 2018 9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

by
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Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 2752, Relating to the Community Court Outreach Project.

Purpose: Appropriates funds to the Judiciary to conduct an evaluation study to assess the impact of the community court outreach project in reducing the administrative burden within the judicial system and expenses including staff and technology necessary for implementing the community court at community sites.

Judiciary's Position: The Judiciary strongly supports House Bill No. 2752.

The Judiciary appreciates this bill that will allow the Community Outreach Court (COC) to expand its operation and to reach out further into the community on Oahu as directed by Act 55 (2017).

As noted in the Judiciary's annual report, the COC started as a pilot project and has been operating in the Honolulu District Court building since January 2017. With this initial success, the Legislature established the COC under Act 55 which became effective in July 2017. The Act directs the COC to become mobile. The Judiciary, City & County of Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, and Hawai'i State Public Defender's Office share the common goal of bringing the COC closer to those who are residentially-challenged and to the community.

As of January 2018, the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney and Public Defender's Office reported that the COC had 64 participants (unique participants, excludes repeat offenders). There were 47 participants who completed a total of 640.5 hours of community service and 118 referrals to social services. Among the COC participants, 2 obtained their driver's license; 11



obtained housing (of which 6 obtained housing on their own volition); 10 were sheltered (of which 2 found shelter on their own volition); 11 were living with families and friends; and 13 found a job (11 found a job on their own volition).

The COC is currently held on the second and fourth Thursday of each month in Honolulu District Court and on the third Tuesday of each month in Wahiawā District Court. A total of 27 court sessions have been held since January 2017.

Through designated staff and in collaboration with the Public Defender and the Prosecuting Attorney, we foresee more court settings to address any increase in COC cases. In order to meet the mandate and the potential increase in cases, the Judiciary respectfully requests support and funding for personnel and equipment.

In order to continue to expand the COC into a non-traditional court setting and meet the mandate set forth in Act 55, the Judiciary respectfully requests three additional positions, \$155,300 in annual funding, and \$8,100 in one-time equipment funding as follows:

- a) one (1) new, full-time court clerk position (District Court Clerk II) to record and execute the court's orders and dispositions;
- b) one (1) new, full-time court bailiff position (Court Bailiff II) to manage the court's calendar and court proceeding;
- c) one (1) new, full-time clerk (Judicial Clerk III) to calendar cases and to prepare, process, issue, and maintain court documents;
- d) a contract with a security company and sheriff positions to provide security and safety to all involved; and
- e) computers and peripheral equipment, dedicated office supplies, and remote connectivity to the Judiciary Information Management System (JIMS).

Also, the Public Defender's Office would need one (1) additional intake case coordinator position and transportation vouchers for COC participants, which would cost about \$62,000 annually.

Finally, we respectfully request that any funding be provided directly to the responsible party (i.e., the Judiciary, the Public Defender, and the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney) to increase efficiency in financial transactions. Last year, Acts 49 and 195 directed that funding for the Judiciary and Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney be transferred through the Public Defender's Office which delayed receipt of funds since Memorandums of Agreement had to be set up among the parties involved.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.